

a programmable data element tracking and linking module for linking (i) object identity data to (ii) corresponding object attribute data to form a composite data element, for use by a host system.

Claim 670 (currently amended): The programmable data element queuing, handling, processing and linking ~~mechanism~~ device of claim 669, wherein each said object attribute data element is an element selected from the group consisting of object dimension-related data, object-weight data, object-content data, and object-interior data.

Claim 671 (currently amended): The programmable data element queuing, handling, processing and linking ~~mechanism~~ device of claim 669, wherein said object identification and attribute acquisition system comprises a PLIIM-based object identification and attribute acquisition system.

Claim 672 (previously presented): A programmable data-element queuing, handling and processing subsystem integrated into a PLIIM-based object identification and attribute acquisition system having a source of object identity data elements and a source of object attribute data elements and operated in either a singulated or non-singulated object transport environment, said programmable data-element queuing, handling and processing subsystem comprising:

a first data element input unit for receiving object identity data elements as inputs from said source of object identity data elements;

a second data element input unit for receiving object attribute data elements as inputs from said source of object attribute data elements; and

a mechanism for queuing, handling, processing and linking said object identity data element inputs and said object attribute data element inputs, and generating as an output, for each object identity data element supplied as input, a combined data element comprising an object identity data element, and one or more object attribute data elements from said source of object attribute data elements.

Claim 673 (currently amended): The programmable data-element queuing, handling and processing subsystem of claim 672, wherein said source of object identity data elements is selected from the group consisting of a bar code symbol reader, and an RFID reader, and the like.

Claim 674 (currently amended): The programmable data-element queuing, handling and processing subsystem of claim 672, wherein said object attribute data elements are selected from the group consisting of object dimensions, weight, x-ray analysis, and neutron beam analysis, and the like.